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The Beginnings of HOUSTON.

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THE BEGINNINGS of HOUSTON

AN EXTRACT FROM
"HARRIS COUNTY 1822-1845"

By
ADELE B. LOOSCAN

Published by the
TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



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Judge Geo. W. Tyler,
compliments of Mrs Adele B. Looscan.
Christmas, 1926.

THE BEGINNINGS
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The Beginnings of Houston

The town site of Harrisburg at the junction of Buffalo and Bray's Bayous offers so pleasing a view, its facilities for navigation and drainage are so superior, by comparison, that the question is often asked, why the chief city of the county was not built there instead of Houston. The following statement tells briefly the chief causes for the establishment of a city at a point which offered no natural advantages, and whose successful upbuilding was long regarded as extremely problematical.

Notwithstanding the litigation over the estate of John R. Harris, still pending in the courts when the revolution broke out, the town of Harrisburg was flourishing at that time. The additional prominence given to it by the Provisional Government of the Republic of Texas in making it the seat of government, for a few weeks before the battle of San Jacinto, contributed to its destruction. Santa Anna, foiled in his attempt to capture the Texas cabinet, who had their headquarters at the home of Mrs. Jane Harris, avenged himself upon the town by setting fire to every house, whose owners had fled when the Government, thanks to a timely warning, retreated to New Washington.¹

The destruction of Harrisburg was so complete and the probability of a final settlement of the lawsuit which involved the title to its land so remote, that the idea of founding a new town in its vicinity on Buffalo Bayou immediately took form in the minds of two enterprising New Yorkers, Augustus C. and John K. Allen, who had been living for several years at Nacogdoches. They lost no time in taking steps toward the purchase of a tract of land on the Bayou, five miles north of Harrisburg, where they laid off a town and called it Houston, in honor of the victorious

¹The only house spared by the Mexicans stood on the edge of the prairie about one-eighth of a mile south of the present intersection of the Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio Railroad track with that of the Galveston, Houston & Henderson. It was known to the old settlers as the "Farmer house," and to its friendly shelter Mrs. Jane Harris repaired, when, returning after the battle of San Jacinto, she found here the only vestige of the lately thriving town.

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General. News of the projected town spread rapidly, many people were homeless, and they flocked thither, especially from Brazoria and Harris County. In fact, it became a town of tents and clap boards before the Allens had purchased the land.² It was located on an original grant from Mexico to John Austin, dated July 20, 1824, and was inherited by his widow, Elizabeth E. Austin, who became the wife of T. F. L. Parrott. "In August, 1836, Messrs. A. C. and J. K. Allen bought of Mrs. T. F. L. Parrott the south half of the lower of the two leagues granted to John Austin, near the head of tide water on Buffalo Bayou. The deed is dated August 26, 1836, the consideration expressed, five thousand dollars. It declares, after the peculiar manner of the deeds of that day, 'that the above price is the just value, and should it be hereafter worth more, she makes a donation of the excess to the purchasers be it more or less.' It was recorded in Harrisburg County record of deeds, November 8, 1837."³ The deed on record from the Mexican Government to John Austin (1824) mentions the occupancy of a part of the league by George Robinson, another first settler, of whom little is known.

By the time the first congress of the Republic assembled at Columbia, in October, 1836, the Allens were prepared to offer sufficient inducements to the government, not only to secure for the new town the title of capital of the Republic, but also to make it the county seat of Harrisburg, afterwards Harris County.

The first map of Houston seems to have been made by G. and T. H. Borden, and was used for advertising the new city. It was announced in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* of November 19, 1836, that it could be seen in the Senate chambers at Columbia. A lithograph copy of it, which was the property of Robert Wilson, is made a part of this history, and the newspaper clipping attached and forming a part of it shows that advertising methods were, at that date, fully

²See "Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris," *THE QUARTERLY*, IV, 182.

³Burke's *Texas Almanac* for 1879, p. 83.

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up to the present standard of the most enterprising real estate agents.⁴

The first session of the congress of Texas, having adjourned on December, 1836, met at the newly laid out city of Houston, on May 5, 1837. All roads now led to Houston. Frame buildings sprang up almost by magic, and in an incredibly short time numerous stores, hotels, boarding houses, and saloons gave evidence that the town had come to stay. Among the first needs were a court-house and jail, and a block of ground had been set aside by the Allens to serve these purposes. The contract for building a two story frame court-house and a log jail was awarded to Dr. Maurice L. Birdsall and work upon both buildings was industriously carried on, but many obstacles were encountered, and the court-house had not been completed when the first term of court was held, in March, 1837. In fact it was scarcely more than begun, so the branches of some pine trees which had been cut down served as an assembly room for the first grand jury.

⁴This advertisement formed a part of the first map of the city of Houston:

THE CITY OF HOUSTON.

"Situated at the head of navigation on the West bank of the Buffalo Bayou, is now for the first time brought to public notice, because, until now, the proprietors were not ready to offer it to the public, with the advantages of capital and improvement.

"The City of Houston is located at a point on the river which must ever command the trade of the largest and richest portion of Texas. By reference to the map, it will be seen that the trade of San Jacinto, Spring Creek, New Kentucky and the Brazos, above and below Fort Bend, must necessarily come to this place, and will at this time warrant the employment of at least One Million Dollars of capital, and when the rich lands of this country shall be settled, a trade will flow to it, making it beyond doubt, the great interior commercial emporium of Texas.

"The City of Houston is distant 15 miles from the Brazos river; 30 miles a little north of East from San Felipe; 60 miles from Washington; 40 miles from Lake Creek; 30 miles Southwest from New Kentucky, and 15 miles by water and 8 or 10 by land from Harrisburg. Tide water runs to this place and the lowest depth of water is about six feet. Vessels from New Orleans or New York can sail without obstacle to this place, and steamboats of the largest class can run down to Galveston Island in 8 or 10 hours, in all seasons of the year. It is but a few hours sail down the bay, where one may take an excursion of pleasure and enjoy the luxuries of fish, fowl, oysters and sea bathing. Galveston Harbor being the only one in which vessels drawing a large draft of water can navigate, must necessarily render the Island the great naval and commercial depot of the country.

"The City of Houston must be the place where arms, ammunition and provisions for the government will be stored, because, situated in the very heart of the country, it combines security and the means of easy distribution, and a national armory will no doubt very soon be established at this point.

"There is no place in Texas more healthy, having an abundance of excellent spring water, and enjoying the sea breeze in all its freshness. No place in Texas possesses

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The City of Houston was originally laid off entirely on the South side of Buffalo Bayou, near its junction with White Oak. As shown by the first map, a space averaging one hundred feet in width along the Bayou bank was designated Water Street. The streets running from Northwest to Southeast were as nearly parallel with the banks of the stream as its sinuous course would permit, and were named respectively, Commerce, Franklin, Congress, Preston and Prairie; bisecting streets were named Brazos, Smith, Louisiana, Milam, Travis, Main, Fannin, San Jacinto, Carolina, Austin and Lamar. These completed the limits of the City on the date its projectors and owners obtained the votes of Congress necessary to make it the temporary seat of Government.

These first street names show that the city had its birth just after the struggle for independence, and that its founders were neither unmindful of the sacrifice of life within the bounds of Texas, nor of the noble spirits in the States, who, with counsel and money aided the cause and contributed to its success. Their names were household words. Everybody knew that Senator W. C. Preston of South Carolina was one of the best friends Texas had, and it was fitting that not only his own name, but that of his State, should be commemorated, in the capital of the Republic.

A later map bore the name of Alcee La Branche, Charge

so many advantages for building, having Pine, Ash, Cedar and Oak in inexhaustible quantities; also the tall and beautiful Magnolia grows in abundance. In the vicinity are fine quarries of stone.

"Nature appears to have designated this place for the future seat of Government. It is handsome and beautifully elevated, salubrious and well watered, and now in the very heart or center of population, and will be so for a length of time to come. It combines two important advantages: a communication with the coast and foreign countries, and with the different portions of the Republic. As the country shall improve railroads will become in use, and will be extended from this point to the Brazos, and up the same, also from this up to the head waters of San Jacinto, embracing that rich country, and in a few years the whole trade of the upper Brazos will make its way into Galveston Bay through this channel.

"Preparations are now making to erect a water Saw Mill, and a large Public House for accommodation, will soon be opened. Steamboats now run in this river, and will in a short time commence running regularly to the Island. The proprietors offer the lots for sale on moderate terms to those who desire to improve them, and invite the public to examine for themselves.

"A. C. Allen for A. C. Allen and J. K. Allen."

"N. B. Since the above has been in press we have learned that Houston has become the seat of Government."

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d' affaires from the United States. He was very popular, and the street that had first been called Lamar was changed to La Branche, and is so called today. As the influence of Lamar was thrown in favor of the location of the capital at Austin it is well known that he was not a favorite in the city of Houston. However, as the city grew, his name was again placed on its enlarged map, to designate one of its chief streets. Joseph Tucker Crawford, who visited Texas in 1837 to report on the condition of the country for Great Britain,⁵ was popular with the citizens of Houston, and the second map of the town shows his name on one of the streets.

It was evidently the first intention to locate the government buildings on the block marked "Congress Square" and the adjoining unmarked block, shown on the map as lying between Congress and Prairie Streets, and bounded on one side by Travis and on the other by Milam. Besides the Borden map there were others made and used by the Allens in disposing of the townsite, and several different plans seem to have been devised for the location of the Capitol building, which were not adopted. The National Building was to occupy the center of four city blocks, and the broad avenue leading to it was Capitol Avenue. Circumstances, of whose detail we have no record, determined upon another location for the Capitol.

Governor F. R. Lubbock, in his memoir, *Six Decades in Texas*, says,

The Allens had undertaken to provide a capitol building for Houston, but fearing they might not have it ready for the meeting of congress on the first of May, erected on Main Street a one story building covering the front of an entire block. At one corner of the block a large room was constructed for the Senate, and on the other corner a larger one for the House of Representatives, and the space between partitioned off into rooms for the department offices. Col. Thos. W. Ward was the Capitol Contractor under the Allens.

This crude substitute for the capitol building was soon superseded by a two story structure covering about two and one-half lots on the northwest corner of Main Street and

⁵See THE QUARTERLY, XV, 202 ff.

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Texas Avenue, which was built for the Allens by Thomas W. Ward, of lumber brought from Maine. The Republic of Texas paid a yearly rental of \$5,000, beginning the twenty-fifth day of September, 1837.⁶

The presence of State officials, of ministers and other representatives from foreign countries invested the place with an importance out of harmony with its general character and primitive environment.

The need for a supply of drinking water for the large number of people who frequented the capital was keenly felt. One of the first acts of Congress, approved December 18, 1837, authorized F. R. Lubbock to procure cisterns for the use of the capitol building, to contain 10,000 gallons. On December 15, 1838, a meeting of citizens was held to organize the Houston Water Works Company, Beauchamps Springs on White Oak Bayou to furnish the supply. The water of these Springs, about two miles distant, was considered pure, and as the wooden tanks, attached to the dwellings and other houses, did not hold sufficient rain water, this water was sold by the gallon and carted about town. The Water Works Company, so far as records show, did not progress farther than the meeting, and the election of Wm. Lawrence as Chairman and A. F. Woodward, Secretary. It was more than forty years after this date that a waterworks company became a real factor among Houston enterprises.

In the founding of the city much stress had been laid upon its being at the head of navigation, and its citizens from the beginning strove faithfully to make this true. They fully realized that it would require great efforts, and the ball then set in motion has not ceased to roll with in-

⁶After the removal of the capitol to Austin in 1839, this building was converted into a hotel and was long known as the "Old Capitol." Several pictures of the building made while it served this purpose have been preserved; it remained practically unchanged for many years, except for additions at the back. In 1882 the wooden structure was entirely demolished and A. Groesbeck erected on its site a handsome brick hostelry, and named it the "New Capitol Hotel." This eventually passed into the hands of Wm. M. Rice, and as part of the property bequeathed by him to the Rice Institute, was, through its Board of Managers, replaced by a splendid building, eighteen stories high, called the "Rice Hotel." Thus did the best known landmark of Houston lose its historic title, and receive in its stead that of an old citizen, who laid the foundation of his fortune in the first years of its settlement.

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creasing momentum up to the present time. Harrisburg had heretofore been regarded as the head of navigation on Buffalo Bayou, and it required a great deal of labor and time, expended in cutting away logs, brush and trees, before a yawl boat could be rowed up to Houston. Four days were consumed in its passage from Harrisburg to that city. On January 26, 1837, the first steamboat, called the *Laura*, Thomas Granger, Captain, landed at Houston, and on April 21, of the same year, the first sailing vessel, the *Rolla*, arrived, just in time for many of the passengers to attend there, the first anniversary ball of the battle of San Jacinto. Navigation between Harrisburg and Houston was always extremely difficult, and on that account many people believed that it would be impossible to build a town at Houston.

As early as May, 1839, *The Morning Star* mentions the names of the committee which had been appointed to make improvements in Buffalo Bayou,—J. D. Andrews, President; William M. Bronaugh, Secretary; Henry Kesler, William Pierpont, William M. Cook and George Allen, committee. It is probable that the work consisted mostly in cutting away the branches and dense foliage of magnolia and other trees which overhung the stream.

The first two years in the life of Houston were marked by great activity in the organization of societies of various kinds. There were grave minds among the first settlers, as evidenced by the existence of a Philosophical Society before the close of the first year. The original constitution of this society was in the possession of Mrs. Jane Gray, widow of Judge Peter W. Gray, and was read by her at the celebration of Texas Independence Day held at my home, March 2, 1892. Unfortunately this interesting document, embracing also the names of the first members, was soon afterwards lost or misplaced by its owners.⁷

As in most early settlements of the South and West, the love of horses and horse racing held sway in Harris County.

⁷In the *Houston Post* of March 3, 1893, Mrs. A. H. Mohl's report of the celebration mentioned, gives the names of some members of the Philosophical Society.

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Old settlers have told that meetings in neighborhoods for this sport would hold for several days; there would be races by day and dances by night. While the aspiring new city had a Philosophical Society in its first year, the desire of the sporting citizens for a regularly organized society for the proper conduct of "the races" was recorded in the next year. On October 31, 1838, the Jockey Club came into existence, and for many years the newspapers containing notices of the races under its management formed a feature of interest as absorbing to the community as are the records of base ball today.

Histories of the churches of Houston show that several congregations of different denominations were formed in 1838. A tablet on the inside of the front wall of Christ Church (Episcopal), corner of Texas Avenue and Fannin Street, bears this lettering:

"In memory of the First Vestry of Christ Church, elected April 1, 1838. Wm. F. Gray, Senior Warden; E. S. Perkins, Junior Warden; D. W. C. Harris, Clerk.

VESTRYMEN

Geo. Allen, Memucan Hunt, Todd Robinson, John D. Andrews, Charles Kessler, James Webb, John Birdsall, Wm. Pierpont, A. F. Woodward."

While Chaplain of the Senate 1837-1838, Rev. Littleton Fowler (Methodist) preached for the citizens, and obtained from A. C. Allen a deed to half a block of ground on Texas Avenue, on which was afterward built the first Methodist Church, called Shearn Church, in honor of Charles Shearn, a prominent citizen and leading member.

Rev. W. Y. Allen of the Presbyterian Church arrived at Houston on March 31, 1838, and bore an important part in building up a Presbyterian congregation, and in organizing a Sunday School and Bible Society. Newspaper records show that the Bible Society had among its officers citizens occupying high positions in the State and County.

The members of the Baptist Church held regular meetings, and had advanced so far, on August 25, 1838, as to

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procure a bell, which, it was announced, would ring at the proper time for assembling.

The Roman Catholics were ministered to by two Missionary priests, Father Timon and Father Odin, who were sent out from the Lazarus House of St. Louis, Missouri.

The religious services of the Protestant denominations were held for several years, sometimes in the Senate chamber and often in the court-house.

The first temperance society of which there is any record in Texas was organized at the capitol on February 20, 1839. Speeches were made by many prominent citizens, and General Houston made a strong argument in favor of temperance.

Meantime the carpenters, whose services were in great demand, united, and established a bill of prices for work; they organized as "Master Carpenters," in February of the same year, and their example was soon followed by the printers, who formed the Texas Typographical Association.

Besides these evidences of progressive organization, which signalized the momentous year of 1839, Houston could boast of a Fire Company and Fire Engine No. 1; a Board of Health, and a corps of City Hospital Surgeons; merchants, who advertised to have constantly on hand a supply of ice (although it was brought by sailing vessels from New England), and others who had schooners ready to carry passengers or freight from Houston to New York. There was "A Young Men's Society" which met in the Senate chamber, and debated such questions as, "Ought duelling to be punished as a Capital Crime?"⁸ There was a dancing and waltzing academy, where the latest dances from New York were taught, a fancy bakery on Main Street, where fine cakes were made and sold. Select military balls were given on the anniversary of the battle of San Jacinto, when only the officers of the army and navy, their families, with others specially invited, were allowed to be present. Public dinners, given to distinguished visitors, whom business or curios-

⁸*The Morning Star*, June 4, 1839.

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ity called to the capital, were marked by after dinner speeches of rhetorical merit worthy to rival those on similar occasions in older and more pretentious cities.

The cause of education was represented by several private schools, but was chiefly centered in the "Houston City School," conducted on broad lines, which made it virtually open to rich and poor. A tuition fee of three dollars per month was charged, but the children of parents unable to pay this amount were admitted free. The course of study embraced all branches taught in first class academies, and its business affairs were under the management of a school committee.

There was, however, one serious drawback to improvement, and the increase of population in Houston, which was lightly touched upon by the newspapers of that day, and which limited knowledge of sanitary laws rendered the people powerless to prevent, namely: the almost yearly prevalence of yellow fever. This dread disease, in some years, literally decimated the population, and accounts in large measure for the slow growth of the city at this period, and for many years afterward. There were no professional, or trained nurses, and kind hearted residents forgot all selfish interests, turned their homes into hospitals for afflicted friends, and, in many cases for strangers, and devoted themselves to the needs of the sick. Details of countless instances of Christian devotion, well known to old citizens, would fill volumes illustrating the large hearted character of Houston's first settlers. The very name "yellow fever" carried the suggestion of mortality, and was not used by the press, when it could be avoided, and never until the disease was known to be raging with great virulence. The fall of 1839 witnessed a very fatal epidemic of this plague.

Houston had made steady advances during its two years as capital of the Republic. When this honor, the source of its distinction, and in large measure of its prosperity, was withdrawn, a cloud of gloom gathered and spread. Congress, in 1839, decreed that Austin should henceforth be the capital. After this law went into effect, and the removal of

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the archives took place, Houston had the air of a deserted town. A census, taken a short time before, stated that the resident population was 2,073—males 1,620, females 453—amount of property assessed \$2,405,865. The prosperity then existing was shown by the fact that there were two theatres, several hotels and boarding houses, to say nothing of business houses, and five steamboats were plying regularly between Houston and Galveston. It was the largest town in Texas, and its citizens were of a character to overcome obstacles. However during the period of depression following the removal of the capital, some of them, recognizing the superior natural advantages of Harrisburg (*viz*: good navigation), removed thither. The lawsuit which had been pending between the Harrises and Wilsons had been settled by compromise, and the property owners felt that, if a railroad could be built to the Brazos, the facilities for shipping at Harrisburg would at once build up the town. Several leading families devoted themselves to this enterprise, and moved from Houston to Harrisburg. A sharp rivalry sprang up between the towns, which were only five miles apart in a straight line, though the many curvings of the Bayou more than doubled the distance by water. The idea of railroad transportation from the head of navigation to the rich cotton lands of the Brazos opened a vista of future prosperity, and resulted in the initial railway enterprise of Texas, the Harrisburg and Brazos Railroad, which was projected in 1839, and actually begun early in 1840. A contract for railroad ties was entered into between A. Briscoe, proprietor of the railroad, and Maurice L. Birdsall, on the 28th day of February, 1840⁹. One of the provisions of the contract shows the unsettled state of the country. It was expressly stated "that, should the country be invaded by a foreign foe, from the time that said foe shall enter the limits

⁹Birdsall agreed "to take from the woods and deliver within thirty feet of the line of said railroad three thousand pieces of post oak or cedar timber, in a sound state, seven feet in length, clear of the chip or kerf, and from eight to twelve inches in diameter, hewn straight on one side, and that said timber shall be deposited five sticks or pieces to every twenty-five feet of the road; also that five hundred pieces shall be delivered within one month from the first day of March of the current year, and that the remaining twenty-five hundred shall be delivered within four months thereafter, at the discretion of the said Birdsall." Birdsall was to receive payment

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of the Republic till they shall depart beyond said limits, all obligations of either party by this contract shall be suspended, and shall commence again on the departure of said enemy." Attached to the contract are receipts issued to Ely and Ager, subcontractors at different times, in amounts of one hundred and fifty dollars each, cash payment, in Texas promissory notes. Some of the receipts are dated May 8, 1840. A considerable number of the ties contracted for were delivered along the graded road-bed, which extended for about two miles out from Harrisburg, toward the Brazos River. The grades were still to be seen within the memory of the writer. Handsome certificates of stock were printed, and are in my possession, relics of the first railroad enterprise in Texas.

A paper marked, "California Railroad" in the papers of A. Briscoe, offers a complete plan for the building of a railroad to San Diego on the Pacific Coast. The line proposed, was to go by the way of Richmond, to Prairieville, Fayetteville, through Rock Island, through Washington County to Austin; thence to El Paso, by the most direct route. The practicability of this route was largely based upon a report made by Major Neighbors, and other immigrants. It was also urged as possessing advantages over any other, because work could be carried on at all seasons of the year, not having to lie by for snow and cold weather.

The plans for selling town lots as the road progressed was one of the schemes for raising revenue. And but for the unsettled condition of the country due to threatened invasion, this initial railroad to the Pacific might have taken permanent form.¹⁰ This vision became a reality with the completion of the Southern Pacific in 1883.

of fifty cents lawful money or its equivalent in promissory notes of the government, for each piece of timber so delivered. Among other provisions of the contract, was one that Birdsall should receive certificates of railroad stock for any balance due him after the payment of all expenses incurred by him had been met. Certificates of stock were to be issued when the road should be vested in a chartered company, or when it should be completed to the Brazos timber.

¹⁰*The Morning Star*, Friday March 20, 1840, contains a report of the surveyor of this pioneer railroad, also the report of a committee that had been appointed to select the route. The report is signed by Stephen Richardson and Wm. P. Harris, committee, and by A. Briscoe, Trustee for Jacob Rothans, Engineer, Harrisburg, March

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But, those citizens of Houston who had invested all their fortunes, however small, in the future of that place, determined also to have a railroad to the cotton fields. As early as April 25, 1839, The Houston and Brazos Railroad, with A. C. Allen as president of the company, appeared from time to time in the advertising columns of the *Morning Star*. It was designed to run via Brazos City to Austin, and notices over the signature of James S. McGahey, who had contracted to grade ten miles of road, were inserted occasionally in the papers, up to April, 1842. Whether any work was actually done on this road is not known.

The city of Galveston having been incorporated, February 5, 1840, an act requiring the postmaster general to contract for having the mail carried twice a week between Houston and Galveston, was passed by the third Congress and approved by President Lamar on the same date, February 5, 1840. Soon after this, regular mail packets began running between Houston and Galveston; the appointed hour for leaving Houston was 10 a. m. The boat was expected to spend one day of twenty-four hours in going, and the next in returning. The steamboat *Albert Gallatin*, Captain Sterrett, and the *Dayton*, Captain S. B. Eves, were among those early packets, which greatly promoted the business interests, and the comfort of the traveling public. They afforded the quickest means of transportation; yet, the shallow waters on Redfish and Clopper's Bars obstructed navigation in the bay, so that, during the prevalence of northers, boats were often

18, 1840, with the request that, the "Galveston Civilian and Richmond Telescope will copy and forward account."

About one year afterwards the same parties were operating under the charter of the Harrisburg Railroad and Trading Company. Its Board of Directors was A. Hodge, Stephen Richardson, Andrew Briscoe, Robert Wilson and D. W. C. Harris. They organized by electing A. Briscoe President pro tem. Subscription books were opened at Harrisburg by Stephen Richardson and D. W. C. Harris, at Galveston by John S. Sydnor and A. M. Jackson, and at Fort Bend by John P. Borden and James B. Miller.

The failure of the first attempt at railroad building did not dishearten the people of Harrisburg, and after annexation gave assurance of the safety of investments in Texas, largely through the efforts of General Sidney Sherman, one of its citizens, they began to enlist the interest of Boston capitalists. By this means the first railroad built in the State, The Buffalo Bayou, Brazos, and Colorado Railroad, was chartered February 19, 1850, and the company organized June 1, 1850. Construction went forward steadily and in a few years cotton was transported by rail from the Brazos plantations to the wharf at Harrisburg—forming a large part of Texas commerce. For a more extended account of this railroad see THE QUARTERLY, VII, 279.

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obliged to await a change in the weather, to avoid being stranded for many days on these bars.

Weekly mails had been received by carrier from Austin since soon after the establishment of the seat of government there; western mails via Richmond, Columbia, Brazoria, Columbus, Matagorda, etc., eastern, via Montgomery, Washington, Nacogdoches, San Augustine and Red River County; those to the United States and Europe were via Galveston by steam packets, according to the days of their arrival and departure. It was occasionally noted in the Houston press at this time that, "nearly a month had elapsed since the receipt of mail from the United States," and many letters and important documents were conveyed by private hands or special messengers.

A few spasmodic efforts were made to induce immigration. One of these, by which the property holders of Harrisburg again sought to build up their town and its environs was by the introduction of a French colony under the auspices of Snider de Pellegrini.¹¹ He agreed to bring in French immigrants, establish a large bank, warehouse, and store, import merchandise from France, and settle the town and adjoining lands with thrifty Frenchmen. The scheme promised well. The laws of Texas allowed free importation of French wines, etc. Pellegrini built an immense warehouse at Harrisburg. In it he gave a grand ball, at which choice wines and costly French confections were

¹¹Papers of the Harrisburg Town Company record that, on July 23, 1842, in the city of Galveston an agreement was entered into between "M. Snider Pellegrini, Knight of the Great Cross of the Order of Jerusalem, Director of a society of Colonization established in France, and of which the central office is in Paris, and residing now at Galveston, Texas, on the one part, and Mr. Wm. P. Harris, one of the principal proprietors of the town of Harrisburg, Harris County, and residing on his farm, Harris County, Texas, on the other part for himself and in the name of the other proprietors of the town of Harrisburg."

The agreement is written in both French and English; its terms are very liberal towards Pellegrini, ceding to him certain blocks of lots, and lands, the free use of timber on other lands, and all the bricks then in the brick kiln at Harrisburg. It further provides that, "the exclusive right and privilege of banking which the proprietors of the Town of Harrisburg may have either as a corporation or in virtue of their charter for the Harrisburg Railroad and Trading Company shall be given to Pellegrini. One third of all the advantages which may hereafter accrue by virtue of said charter shall accrue to the said Pellegrini."

"It is also agreed that two leagues of land shall be reserved in the vicinity of Harrisburg during five years, to be sold in lots to emigrants at an average of five

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served. Preparations were made for furnishing the immigrants with lands, on which to establish vineyards, as in France. But immigrants did not come in large numbers, and most of those who availed themselves of Pellegrini's inducements fell victims to malarial and other climatic diseases. They were unaccustomed to the hardships of primitive modes of life, and the brilliant enterprise having resulted in failure, its originator was denominated "a mad castle builder."

The prosperity of the country was continually interfered with and set back by threats of Mexican invasion; all the able bodied men were expected to respond at short notice, and equip themselves for military campaigns of uncertain duration, while their business interests were neglected, and in many instances abandoned.

History has never given an adequate idea of the deadly stagnation of business enterprises, in the Republic, nor of the excitement caused both within and without its borders by the Mexican occupation of San Antonio in September, 1842. The frequent call "to arms," sounded the death knell of many business ventures. Foreign promoters of immigration societies, as well as friendly capitalists in the United States, were wary about risking investments where conditions were so unstable.

The citizens of Houston had not allowed themselves to be disheartened by the loss of the seat of government. It

dollars per acre, and a commission of ten per centum shall be paid to Mr. Pellegrini for such sales."

Pellegrini on the other hand obligated himself "to establish at Harrisburg, there to remain at least five years from the date of this instrument, his principal commercial House, and his principal office for the issue, circulation, and redemption of his paper money. To secure the redemption of which he shall have one third of the amount of circulation in specie and an agency in New Orleans. The said Commercial House shall, after the expiration of four months employ a capital of at least fifty thousand dollars."

Pellegrini agreed "to direct to Harrisburg the greater part of the emigrants which the Society of which he is the Director shall send to Texas." The last clause of the document stated that, "It is agreed that if any alteration shall be deemed important to the general interest to alter the present plan of the town of Harrisburg it shall be effected according to the wishes of Mr. Pellegrini, and among said alterations a water street of the width of sixty feet shall be made on each side of the river."

The document is signed in duplicate by Snider de Pellegrini and Wm. P. Harris, and witnessed by D. W. Clinton Harris, J. S. Huttner, S. T. Leger, D. M. P., and Coisy. The original contract is in my possession.

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was believed by many, that the location of the capital at Austin would not be permanent, that the authority by which it had been removed thither, might, in a short time, decree its return; these hopes were temporarily realized in 1842, when a session of congress was again held at Houston. But, the practical business men did not rely upon such a contingency; they realized that proximity to the best cotton growing lands, and to water transportation, constituted the real basis upon which Houston could be made a city, and the great cotton market of Texas. With concerted action they encouraged business by every honorable means practiced in larger cities. One of the first steps taken, was to obtain a charter for a chamber of commerce, which was done early in 1840, and the spirit of combination begun at this time was systematically followed by Houston's business men.¹²

In 1842 the merchants offered a prize of a silver cup for the first five bales of cotton of that year's growth, and a gold cup for the first twenty thereafter. Both prizes in that year were won by L. W. Groce.¹³ The gold cup is still in the possession of the Groce family at Hempstead, Texas. It is interesting to note that he was a son of Jared E. Groce, one of the largest cotton planters of early Texas, who is said to have established a cotton gin on the Brazos river in 1825, the second in Texas, the first having been owned by John Cartwright in the "Redlands" of East Texas.

At this time the Masonic fraternity and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows were both firmly established in local lodges, and, besides, Houston was the seat of their grand lodges. Houston had its chamber of commerce, its board of health, its medical and surgical society, its philanthropic purposes, its committee for the improvement of navigation on Buffalo Bayou, its typographical association its crack

¹²The act which granted a charter for the chamber of commerce was passed by the first session of the Third Congress, and approved January 28, 1840. The names of the incorporators were: Thomas M. League, Henry R. Allen, William D. Lee, J. Temple Doswell, T. Francis Brewer, George Gazley, E. Osborne, Charles J. Heddenberg, John W. Pitkin, Charles Kessler, E. S. Perkins, DeWitt Clinton Harris,—all merchants of the city of Houston.

¹³A. S. Ruthven to L. W. Groce, August 12, 1842, in *Telegraph and Texas Register*, August 14, 1842.

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military company the Milam Guards,¹⁴ and its newspapers endeavored to create an impression that they were located, not only in a real, but a very important city.

The boat landing at the foot of Main Street was the center of commercial activity, which was shared by the business houses for two or three blocks on Main, and to a limited extent on Commerce and Franklin Streets. Nearly every merchant handled cotton, hides and peltries. Cotton was truly king.¹⁵ It was not unusual to see in the newspapers proffers "to sell a likely negro boy or several of them for cash or cotton." Long trains of many yoked ox teams hauled the staple from plantations on the Brazos and Colorado Rivers, and delivered it to these stores at the lower end of Main Street, and there awaited their return loads of merchandise for planters and settlements in the interior. Weeks were consumed in effecting these long hauls over bad roads.

The cotton receipts at Houston steadily increased. A statement of the amount of cotton actually shipped from Houston from September 1, 1844, to August 31, 1845, shows 11,359 bales, and an estimate was made in November, 1845, that at least 16,000 bales would be shipped that season.¹⁶ Contrast these figures with the report from the State Department of Agriculture, furnished by the secretary of the cotton exchange at Houston for the cotton year 1912-1913, which shows shipments of 3,324,553 bales; then compare the first cotton contract entered into at Harrisburg in 1829,* with the shipments of Weld and Neville, from identically the same spot, during the period June 1, 1912, to June 30, 1913, of 211,195 bales. One sees here a fulfillment of the aspirations of those early settlers

¹⁴For a sketch of Captain Joseph Daniels, organizer and first captain of the Milam Guards, see *THE QUARTERLY*, V, 19.

¹⁵According to official records of cotton production in Texas, kept in the office of the State Department of Agriculture, the total cotton yield in the year 1830 (which is the first record), was 335 bales. When we note that the preceding year Groce had contracted to deliver to John R. Harris and Zeno Phillips at Harrisburg, from ninety to one hundred bales, probably one-third of the whole cotton crop of Texas, it is evident that Harris County established its position as a cotton market, at a very early date.

¹⁶See *Telegraph and Texas Register*, October 8, and November 5, 1845.

**THE QUARTERLY*, XVIII, 201.

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who strove to establish on the banks of Buffalo Bayou one of the great cotton markets of the world. But, with the realization of this early dream of mercantile power, the second and third generations have taken the place of the first, the nineteenth century superseded the twentieth; to look through the long vista of thronging, eventful years, and see Harris County as it was then, presupposes a mass of historic knowledge and many a treasured tale of traditional lore.

Following the newspaper records we see that previous to the month of November, 1845, a few large brick buildings had been erected, and some brick sidewalks built in the business part of the city of Houston, a daguerrean gallery had been opened by H. R. Allen on the east side of Main Street near the wharf. These items illustrate the small limits of the town, whose chief activities were near the boat landing.

From travelers notes, and from newspaper jottings, we learn that, the only trade, except cotton, showing much life from 1842 until annexation, was that of politics. Public interest in the affairs of the United States was centered exclusively upon the all absorbing topic of "annexation." The ultimate fate of Texas, whether she would be admitted as one of the United States, or continue her independence under the protectorate of England, or of England and France combined, was an all absorbing subject. The recent publication of "Correspondence from the British Archives Concerning Texas" in *THE QUARTERLY*, throws a strong light upon this period. Under the conditions thereby portrayed, one wonders, not at the lack of progress in Houston and Harris County, but rather that any progress at all was made anywhere in Texas. News of the passage of the annexation resolution by the United States Congress caused an immediate rise in the value of Texas bonds and notes, and its effect on all commercial interests was shared by Harris County. It was not, however, until after the Mexican War had brought a feeling of perfect security that enterprises of any magnitude were undertaken.

On April 21, 1845, the citizens of Houston expressed

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their ardent wish for annexation by assembling at the Presbyterian Church, passing resolutions in its favor, and recommending "the several counties in the Republic to meet in primary assemblies to express their will on the subject, and to take such measures to accomplish the matter as they deem most advisable." M. P. Norton presided over this meeting. Geo. H. Bringham and A. M. Gentry were secretaries. The committee which drafted the resolutions was composed of J. W. Henderson, Francis Moore, Jr., William McCraven, F. R. Lubbock, J. Bailey, A. Wynne, I. W. Brashear, T. B. J. Hadley, T. M. Bagby, William M. Rice, C. McAnnelly, M. T. Rodgers, M. K. Snell, H. Baldwin, S. S. Tompkins and John H. Brown.

Harris County elected as delegates to the convention, which framed the constitution of 1845, Isaac W. Brashear, Alexander McGowan and Francis Moore, Jr. All measures necessary for the ratification of the terms of annexation having been complied with, and a date appointed for an election of officers to govern the State of Texas, Harris County chose P. W. Gray and J. N. O. Smith members of the House of Representatives, and Isaac Brashear State Senator.

The following statement in regard to the number of votes cast at this period, undoubtedly one of absorbing interest, affords a very slight, uncertain basis for computing the citizenship of the county seat and county: "In the presidential election of 1844, Harris County cast 686 votes, and in the election of delegates to the convention of 1845, 734 votes, of which 469 were polled in Houston."¹⁷ The same authority gives the following figures on the vote upon the adoption of the constitution framed by the convention mentioned above, together with the question of annexation. This vote, which was taken in Harris County on October 13, 1845, stood "For Annexation," 324, of which 241 votes were cast in Houston; "Against Annexation," 50, of which 44 were cast in Houston; "For the Constitution," 299; "Against the Constitution," 68. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* states that very little interest was manifested, as an impression

¹⁷Burke's Texas Almanac, 1879, 88-90.

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seemed to prevail that a large majority would be given for the Constitution and annexation, and many voters neglected to attend the polls.

In the election of state officials, which took place on December 15, 1845, there was much more interest. The largest vote was polled for the representatives. The records of the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, published a few days later, state that 995 votes were cast in Houston, 117 at Lynchburg, and 77 at Harrisburg (other voting precincts were not given), making a total of 1,189 votes.

No official estimate of the population of the county or city seems to have been made until the census of the United States was taken in 1850, four years after Texas had been admitted to the Union. The county is therein accredited with 4,668 population, of whom 2,396 resided in the city of Houston, and 905 of the total population were negroes. When we consider that, in 1839, a canvass to determine the number of residents in the city of Houston had shown that there were 2,073, at that time, it is plain that the actual increase during these eleven years had been extremely small.

The fluctuating character of much of the population, changing continually as favorable or unpromising conditions arose, many men never staying long enough to acquire the privilege of franchise, makes the voting strength of the town or county an unfair criterion of the real number of people living within their precincts. It is certain that the proportion of families was small when compared with the number of single men, so that an estimate based upon the scholastic population would not be at all applicable for that time. It is evident, however, that the advocates of annexation were disappointed in their expectation that an immense flow of immigration would immediately result from the realization of that measure. Families came, but not in large numbers. Many towns were planned and platted in early days which never had half a dozen residents. Nearly every large landholder on the bayou and bay shore aspired to be the founder of a town. Among those were Hamilton, on Buffalo Bayou, opposite Harrisburg, which was soon merged

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into the latter place. Buffalo, near the mouth of Vince's Bayou, which was also short lived; Louisville, a few miles below Lynchburg, failing to become a town, was known as Scott's Place. New Washington soon took the name of its founder Colonel James Morgan, and is today Morgan's Point, San Leon was located at Edward's Point. None of these developed as their founders anticipated, but the two last named have in recent times become favorite summer resorts. San Jacinto was laid off on the San Jacinto River opposite Lynchburg, and for many years these two places were rivals in the business of boat building, most of the sailing craft and row boats being built there, and the steam boats were overhauled, repaired and repainted by their town workmen. But for the disastrous storms which submerged and destroyed their improvements at different times, they would be of great importance today.

Houston attained its position as a regularly incorporated town in 1837, and neglected no opportunity to assert and maintain its rightful claim to be a leading town. Unfortunately the original records of the city administration were destroyed by fires which consumed the market house and city hall. The files of two newspapers, *The Telegraph and Texas Register* from 1838 to 1856 (incomplete) and *The Morning Star*, April 8, 1838, to October 26, 1844, together with a book representing much valuable research, called *A Historical Review of Southeast Texas* by Hardy and Roberts, have been called into service for a compilation of the list of City officials.¹⁸

It seems that both Houston and Harrisburg were included in an act of Congress of June 5, 1837, incorporating the town of Nacogdoches.¹⁹ That the citizens of Houston speedily held the necessary meeting for availing themselves of the powers therein granted is evident from the following item: "On June 22, following the passage of this act there was held

¹⁸Articles in the *Houston Post*, June 25, 1901, contain reprints from the *Daily Telegraph* of July 9, 1876, recording the fire of the preceding day, and an account of the second fire which occurred June 24, 1901.

¹⁹Laws of the Republic of Texas, October 25, 1836, to June 12, 1837, pages 238-239.

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a citizens meeting with Robert Marsh, President, and Thomas W. Ward, Secretary. . . . The *Telegraph*, September 29, 1837, gives notice of a special election signed by Jas. S. Holman, Mayor, to fill vacancies left by Hugh McCrory and Herman Kelcey, deceased."²⁰ No other city official is mentioned, but the need of a city government in a town which had grown almost in a night, and the brief record given, leaves no doubt that such existed so soon as the requisite authority for creating it could be carried into effect.

On January 25, 1839, an act to incorporate the city of Houston²¹ provided for the enlargement of the city limits, for the collection of city taxes, and gave to the authorities duly elected full powers to regulate and control everything necessary for the convenience and safety of the public. It was under this act of incorporation that Francis W. Moore, who has generally been regarded as the first mayor, went into office.

Newspapers of April, 1839, give the names of city officials in attendance at the meeting of the council in that month as follows:

Francis W. Moore, *Mayor*;

Aldermen:

Asa Brigham,

W. Pierpont,

J. W. Moody,

Robert Miller,

A. Ewing,

J. G. Welchmeyer;

On October 4, 1839, the following officials were given:

Geo. W. Lively, *Mayor*;

Aldermen:

C. J. Heddenberg,

George Stevens,

J. W. Moore,

Thomas M. League,

John Carlos,

A. Wynne;

To these are added the following officials compiled from the volume mentioned above:

D. W. Babwell, *Recorder*;

James Way, *Constable*;

J. W. Bergen, *Secretary*;

Thomas E. Graws, *Market Master*;

J. H. Brown, *Treasurer*;

Isaac Reed, *Sexton*;

Thomas Stansbury, Jr., *Marshal*;

Geo. H. Bringhurst, *Surveyor*;

Cruger and Moore, *Printers*.²²

²⁰Hardy and Roberts, *Historical Review of Southwest Texas*, I, 230, 281, 282.

²¹Laws of the Republic of Texas, First Session, Third Congress, I, page 84.

²²Hardy and Roberts, *Historical Review of Southwest Texas*, I, 237-238, gives the following list from 1840 to 1845:

1840.—Charles Bigelow, mayor. Aldermen: First ward, H. R. Allen, Edmond

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Houston had three official postmasters during the period of the Republic of Texas. The first was Thomas M. League, the second, Thomas William Ward, and the third, Martin K. Snell. The postoffices were kept at different places, at one time at the Houston House, a leading hotel, then in Cruger and Moore's building, described in old records as on Main Street opposite the White House.²³

A great many families of Houston, usually reckoned among the first settlers, and whose names have been perpetuated by descendants, still living, did not become citizens until some years after the period here dealt with, and on the other hand a large proportion of those whose names are recorded in these pages left no children and are to the present citizenship comparatively unknown. Changes in population were frequent; many became discouraged and moved

Osborn; Second ward, William M. Carper, John Carlos; Third ward, George Stevens, John W. Moore; Fourth ward, F. Gerlach, A. Wynne. Recorder, D. W. Babwell; secretary, J. W. Bergen; treasurer, J. H. Brown; inspector, T. F. Graves; marshal, D. Busby; surveyor, G. W. Bringham; constable, W. F. Moody.

1841.—John D. Andrews, mayor. Aldermen: First ward, M. DeChaumes, Barry Carraher; Second ward, Francis Moore, Jr., C. McAnelly; Third ward, George Kimball, George Fisher; Fourth ward, Thomas Stanbury, C. W. Buckley. Recorder, R. R. Wilkins; secretary and treasurer, H. Hyland; marshal, D. Busby; deputy marshal, James H. Clark; constable, H. T. Woody; wharfmaster, Charles Gerlach; marketmasters, E. H. Haines, Jacob Rothaus; surveyor, Charles Bowen; sexton, Michael Connelly.

1842.—John D. Andrews, mayor. Aldermen: First ward, M. DeChaumes, T. Donnellan; Second ward, Charles Shearn, A. S. Ruthven; Third ward, George Kimball, George Gazley; Fourth ward, Thomas Stanbury, E. S. Perkins. Recorders, John Scott, William G. Evans; secretary and treasurer, J. H. Clark; marshal, D. Busby; constable, H. T. Woody; marketmaster, Charles Bowman; wharfmaster, D. Wheeler; surveyor, Jacob Rothaus; sexton, Michael Connelly.

1843.—Francis Moore, Jr., mayor. Aldermen: First ward, T. Donnellan, R. P. Boyce; Second ward, John Church, J. W. Schrimpf; Third ward, Jesse R. Randell, A. McGowan; Fourth ward, E. S. Perkins, H. Baldwin. Recorder, George Fisher; secretary and treasurer, John Fitzgerald; marshal, D. Busby; constable, H. T. Woody; marketmaster, Charles Brown; surveyor, Jacob Rothaus; sexton, S. D. Staats; printer, James Cruger.

1844. Horace Baldwin, mayor. Aldermen: First ward, M. H. Shyrock, R. Levenhagen; Second ward, E. B. Nichols, W. J. Hutchins; Third ward, J. DeCordova, A. McGowan; Fourth ward, C. R. Hopson, H. S. Bachelder. Recorder, Justin Castanie; marshal, James A. Young; constable, William Smith; secretary and treasurer, John Staats.

1845.—W. W. Swan, mayor. Aldermen: First ward, J. A. Harris, B. Carraher; Second ward, W. J. Hutchins, T. M. League; Third ward, J. DeCordova, B. A. Shepherd; Fourth ward, C. R. Hopson. Recorder, James Bailey; marshal, W. H. Smith; Secretary and treasurer, John Fitzgerald; marketmaster, C. Bowman; wharfmaster, D. G. Wheeler; surveyor, Jacob Rothaus; sexton, R. W. Ridgway.

²³The residence of the President was given this imposing title in imitation of the parent Republic's white house at Washington.

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away on account of sickness or business depression, while fatal diseases cut off the lives of hundreds every year.

Among the names of citizens not otherwise recorded in this sketch, who, in their several professions and avocations contributed towards building up the city during the period of its infancy and maintaining its status until annexation gave assurance of future prosperity, are the following:

A. C. Allen,	Bering Brothers,	Horace Baldwin,
John K. Allen,	O. J. Cochran,	Robert F. Campbell,
Samuel L. Allen,	H. D. Taylor,	Benjamin F. Tankers-
William M. Rice,	John Kuhlman,	ley,
F. A. Rice,	Capt. John F. Sterrett,	J. Shackleford, Jr.,
Thos. William House,	Capt. Frederick Wil-	J. D. Grosbeck,
William J. Hutchins,	mot Smith,	Moseley Baker,
E. B. Nichols,	James Rather,	Thomas T. Bailey,
George H. Bringham,	Dr. Alexander Ewing,	Samuel H. Frost,
Benjamin Fort Smith,	Dr. J. E. Jaeger,	A. S. Ruthven,
Francis Richard Lub-	Dr. Ashbel Smith,	C. F. Duer,
bock,	A. J. Burke,	Joseph A. Harris,
John Woodruff,	E. Mather,	L. S. Perkins,
Robert Wilson and	Alexander Thurston,	J. F. Torrey,
J. T. D. Wilson,	William Fairfax Gray,	Newton Carson,
Charles Shearn,	and his sons,	John P. Morris,
Henry Francis Fisher,	Peter W.,	N. Davis,
George W. Kimball,	William Fairfax,	Charles Stephens,
Lodowick Justine Lath-	and A. C. Gray,	F. W. Robertson,
am,	Stephen F. Noble,	John H. Brown,
Cornelius Ennis,	Edward P. Noble,	William Needham,
Henry Whitney Fon-	Stephen Richardson,	B. Levenhagen,
taine,	Dr. I. S. Roberts,	Col. James F. Reilly,
John Houston,	Dr. William A. Elliot,	H. Runnels,
Alexander McGowan,	Capt. Joseph Daniels,	J. Castanie,
Thomas M. Bagby,	Daniel T. Fitchett,	J. Fitzgerald,
Isaac Wright Brashear,	Dr. Francis Moore,	Dr. Hartridge and
H. M. DeChaumes,	S. P. Christian,	Dr. H. D. Cone,
Col. Francis W. John-	John W. Schrimpf,	George Gazley,
son,	N. T. Davis,	C. A. Morris,
Jacob Cruger,	Peter Bauman,	J. M. Robinson,
William R. Baker,	George F. Baker,	J. W. Pitkin,
T. B. J. Hadley,	Peter Gable,	J. W. Scott,
Paul Bremond,	Alanson Taylor,	Francis Gassiot,
E. W. Taylor,	John Kennedy,	Thomas Davidson,
Henry Sampson,	Burchard Miller,	T. R. Taylor,
Robert P. Boyce,	Dr. John L. Bryan,	R. R. Wilkins,
B. A. Shepherd,	Patrick C. Jack,	J. V. Cowling.

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Claude Nicholas Pillot came with his family to Houston in 1837, and lived there a short time, removing thence to Willow Creek, twenty-six miles to the north of the town, where he opened a farm. Members of his family subsequently moved to Houston, where their descendants now live.

Members of the medical and surgical society in 1840 were:

William M. Carper,	J. Hervey Price,	F. L. Lambert,
Robert Watson,	S. Pleasant Baskin,	E. Tucker,
C. Herman Jaeger,	D. H. Leach,	M. Forest,
A. Ewing,	Fletcher Dovey,	J. R. Gardener.

Moritz Tiling in his history of the German element in Texas says, that "By the year 1840 Houston counted among its inhabitants more than seventy-five German families and single men." The German Society of Texas organized at this time (November 29, 1840) began with fifty-three members, viz:

George Fischer,	Emil Simmler,	Casper Gerlach,
Theodore Miller,	Friedr. Otto,	Friedr. Lemsky,
Henry F. Fischer,	Ch. Rienitz,	Friedr. Barthold,
Charles Gerlach,	Charles Baumann,	K. Hermann Jaeger,
Conrad Franke,	Henry A. Kuykendall,	Abraham Brodbeck,
Robert H. Levenhagen,	Wendelin Bock,	Johann Grunder,
Henry Levenhagen,	Ulrich Fischer,	Christian A. Kasting,
Jacob Schroeder,	Karl Fischer,	Peter Dickmann,
J. Hermann, ²⁴	John H. Mueller,	William Weigand,
Joseph Sandman,	Friedr. Schiermann,	Ant. E. Spellenberg,
Gottlieb Gasche,	John Koop,	Peter Bohl,
Martin Rumpff,	Daniel Super,	Johann Wm. Schrimpf,
William Schroeder,	Joseph Ehlinger,	I. Anton Fischer,
Gustav Erichson,	Johann Buhn,	Dr. De Witt,
Jacob Buchmann,	Anton Brueggemann,	A. Shanten,
I. L. Knoll,	William Ewald,	Johann Schweikert.
A. Jung,		

Its officers were:

George Fischer, *President*;

Harry Levenhagen, *1st Vice-Pres.*; Henry F. Fischer, *Secretary*;

Theodore Miller, *2nd Vice-Pres.*; John Koop, *Treasurer*.

²⁴J. Hermann was a native of Switzerland and the father of George Hermann, who, having accumulated a fortune here, left at his death, which occurred on October 20, 1914, a bequest of about five million dollars for the founding of a Charity Hospital for the city of Houston. He had previously donated valuable acreage for a city park to be known as the Hermann Park. Through these benefactions the name of this early emigrant will be forever endeared to the people of Houston.

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Mr. Tilling has in his possession the original minutes of the first meeting of this society—the first German Society of Texas. Mr. Tilling also mentions that among the German families who arrived at Galveston in the brig *North* on Christmas day, 1839, the families of Usener, Schweikart, Habermehl, Bottler, and Karcher, and a single man named Schnell settled in Houston.

The German element in Houston and Harris County has always been accounted a valuable asset, and one which has contributed a large share towards the upbuilding of the county. Some of the descendants of these early German settlers are still living in the city and are among its leading citizens.

The foregoing chronicle of the period of small beginnings in Harris County would be incomplete without special mention of some of the distinguished citizens who dwelt on the shores of Buffalo Bayou and Galveston Bay. That they should have chosen homes on these shores excites no surprise in the minds of those who knew these delightful home sites at a time when nature with a free hand distributed her bounties. Such a wealth of forest trees, magnolias, wild peach, bays, laurels, cedars and pines as lined the bayou banks and bay shores to the very water's edge! Such festoons of yellow jasmine and coral honeysuckle, binding in a bower of sweet perfume the flowering ash, dogwood, and hawthorne of the early spring time. The convenience of water transportation, and accessibility to the base of supplies offered a very practicable argument in favor of such locations, and, when to these are added the abundance of fish and game that were close at hand, it is easy to see that the first settlers chose well.

Burnet and De Zavala dwelt near Lynchburg, where Burnet's Bay and Zavala's Point still preserve the identity of their homes. Dr. Ashbel Smith, after living for a few years at Houston, retired to his country place on the eastern bayshore, to "Evergreen," nearly opposite Morgan's Point. His distinguished service to the Republic of Texas in representing the government at the Courts of St. James and St.

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Cloud are well known, as are his devotion to the interests of the state during the whole of his long life. His great learning earned for him at home the deserved title "Sage of Evergreen," while his cultured manners and diplomatic talents caused him to be known abroad as the "Benjamin Franklin of Texas."

At Cedar Point,²⁵ on the eastern shores of Galveston Bay, General Houston passed the first year or two, after the beginning of the war between the States. In this quiet retreat, surrounded by his family, but saddened by the failures of his efforts to prevent the severing of the tie which bound Texas to the Union, he witnessed the organization of military companies, and the enlistment of his eldest son, under the command of his friend and neighbor, Dr. Ashbel Smith. His life was drawing to its close, when the family returned to their old home at Huntsville.

Colonel James Morgan's home at New Washington, or Morgan's Point, was well improved as early as 1836. His orange groves were laden with ripe fruit in the fall of that year, and the evening meal of his family and guests was sometimes spread under their shade.

General Sidney Sherman chose Crescent Place, which took its name from a curve of the shore on San Jacinto Bay, and thither he came with his bride within a year or two after the conclusion of the war of 1836. An incident, connecting their private lives very closely with the history of Texas, seems appropriate in this place. When General Sherman, then Captain of a troop of cavalry, was ready to march from Kentucky to help the Texans fight their battle for liberty, a grand reception was given them at Newport, Kentucky. Ladies fair and patriots generous and chivalrous attended this last meeting with the gallant volunteers. A beautiful silk flag was to be presented to the company, and it was agreed that the lady to make the presentation should be no other than Miss Isabella Cox, the bride of Sidney Sherman. This banner, with a goddess of liberty painted on its white

²⁵Cedar Point is not within the limits of Harris County, being near the left bank of Cedar Bayou, the boundary between Harris and Chambers, but the intercourse by sail boats between all bay shore settlements was frequent.

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field, and bordered with gold fringe, was the only flag known to have been used on the battle field of San Jacinto; and after the battle it was sent by the secretary of state of the Republic of Texas to Mrs. Sherman. Its frayed remains now rest in a glass-covered case in the State Library at Austin.

Francis R. Lubbock, who served the public almost from the time he set foot on the shore of Texas up to the last days of his ninety-odd years, was one of the first residents of the city of Houston. A few years later, he owned and cultivated a farm and raised cattle on Sims' Bayou, about seven miles from Houston, riding back and forth almost every day, while holding the office of district clerk. His later distinguished position as governor of the state of Texas, and state treasurer, succeeded by service on the board of pardons, rounded out a stainless life devoted to the public good.

Another of the early residents of Houston, who enjoyed the distinction of serving as governor of Texas, was J. W. Henderson, who, having been elected lieutenant-governor, succeeded to this office, when Governor Bell was elected to the United States Senate. He was a leader in the politics of his State as long as he lived.

Colonel James F. Reilly, who first won distinction as a military man, while Captain of the Milam Guards, was selected to represent the Republic as charge d'affaires at Washington. The diplomatic talents of this cultured gentleman so identified him with Texas, that, in later years, when President Buchanan wished to honor the State by a foreign appointment, he made Colonel Reilly minister from the United States to Russia.

The names of William M. Rice, W. A. Van Alstyne, James H. Stevens, B. A. Shepherd and W. J. Hutchins, all merchants of the city of Houston before the period of annexation, are to be found on the board of directors of the first successful railroad built in Texas, The Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado. They all accumulated fortunes; they were men of liberal views, who saw beyond the boundary

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of their own immediate business and knew that combination was necessary for the enlargement and development of the State's resources.

One of these, who built the nucleus of a fortune in the early days when Houston was a very small town, left the bulk of his immense estate, to be expended in building, equipping and maintaining The Rice Institute. This noble foundation which commemorates its founder, William M. Rice, opened its doors to the public in October, 1912, and has begun its educational work, although several years must elapse before the completion of the grand pile requisite for so large and costly an institution of learning.

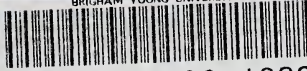
To attempt a contrast between the past and the present would draw me too far afield. It is apparent to all that the day of small things, which has been my theme, is gone. Especially in writing of the city of Houston, have I sought to bring forward the public spirit that animated her citizens; how it prompted them from the very beginning to unite for the public good, how they worked together in the midst of adverse, often most discouraging, conditions, especially after the first two years, but were always determined to get deep water to have a ship channel and to make of Houston a great cotton market. Always believing that the future held the prize, they despised not the day of small things, while constantly striving to attain the great ones.

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